



Dear Colleague,

Your help is needed to protect Iowans from HPV-associated cancers by increasing the administration of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. The Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Iowa AAP), Iowa Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP), and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) are asking for your assistance to protect Iowans from HPV-associated cancers and disease by increasing the number of adolescent's receiving HPV vaccine. HPV vaccine is significantly underutilized in Iowa, and rates are lower than other adolescent vaccines.

Each year, an estimated 262 Iowans are diagnosed with an HPV-associated cancer and eighty-one percent of those cancers are believed to be preventable with a 3-dose HPV vaccine series. In 2013, immunization rates for HPV vaccine received by Iowa adolescents, 13-15 years of age, was only 25 percent for girls and 10 percent for boys.

What you say matters, and how you say it matters even more. Recommending HPV vaccine the same way as other adolescent vaccines is the key to improving the uptake of this life-saving vaccine. Eighty-four percent of girls unvaccinated for HPV had a health care visit where they received another vaccine such as Tdap, but did not receive HPV. Studies demonstrate the most significant factor in a parent's decisions to vaccinate their children with HPV vaccine is a health care provider recommendation. When a provider offers a strong and clear recommendation for HPV vaccination, patients are four to five times more likely to receive HPV vaccine.

The Iowa AAP, IAFP and IDPH urge all Iowa health care providers to increase the consistency and strength of how they recommend HPV vaccine. Parents interested in vaccinating their adolescent may still have questions about the HPV vaccine. Included are resources intended to help health care providers have conversations about HPV vaccine.

- Tips and Time-savers for Talking with Parents about HPV Vaccine
- "A Conversation about HPV", written by Nathan Boonstra MD, FAAP and the Iowa Immunization Coalition

Together, we can protect Iowans from HPV-associated cancers and disease. HPV vaccine IS cancer prevention, and YOU are the key.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debra B. Waldron'.

Debra B. Waldron, MD, MPH, FAAP  
President, Iowa AAP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brent Hoehns MD'.

Brent Hoehns, MD  
President, Iowa Academy of Family Physicians

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Quinlisk MD'.

Patricia Quinlisk, MD, MPH  
Iowa Department of Public Health  
State Medical Director/State Epidemiologist